



## Nitobe Symposium “Language, Conflict, and Security”

### PROGRAMME

Please note: all times are local time (British Summer Time BST- Belfast / London: UTC+1)

**Organisation:** Ulster University and the Centre for Research and Documentation on World Language Problems (CED)

**Conveners:** *Michele Gazzola, Angela Tellier, Mark Fettes, Humphrey Tonkin*

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the **Esperantic Studies Foundation** (ESF).

The working languages of the event will be English and Esperanto.

Simultaneous interpretation will be available.

**Interpreters:** *Duncan Charters and István Ertl*

Since 1996, the Nitobe Symposia have brought together a diverse range of experts and stakeholders to discuss contemporary developments in language policy in international and global contexts. The series is named for the Japanese internationalist and diplomat Nitobe Inazō, who served as Under-Secretary General in the early years of the League of Nations when language issues began to be explicitly addressed at the international level.

The Symposia are organized by the Centre for Research and Documentation on World Language Problems, in collaboration with various local partners and with financial support from the Esperantic Studies Foundation. We are delighted this year to have partnered with the School of Applied Social and Policy Sciences, Ulster University, to explore a theme of great relevance both for Northern Ireland and in the European and global contexts: “Language, conflict and security.”

While conflicts involving language are always intertwined with other issues such as ethnic and racial identity, religion, land and property rights, democratic participation, and so on, the importance of the language dimension is often underestimated, along with the difficulties of achieving just and sustainable compromises through language legislation and policy. The outstanding list of contributors to this year’s programme promises to shine a brighter light on this vital aspect of conflict resolution and peace-building. On behalf of the organizing team, I wish to express our sincere thanks to all those who accepted our invitation, and look forward to a rewarding experience for everyone involved.

*Mark Fettes*

*Director, Centre for Research and Documentation on World Language Problems*

## **MONDAY 26 JULY 2021 ~ 12.30 (Belfast / London time)**

**Welcome address** – Professor Paul Carmichael, Associate Dean (Global Engagement) in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Ulster University

**Welcome and introduction to the day** – Michele Gazzola (Ulster University)

**Introduction to CED, ESF and Nitobe** – Humphrey Tonkin (University of Hartford)

### **SECTION 1 ~ 13.00 – 15.45**

#### **Language policy in Northern Ireland and implications for power-sharing in contested societies**

**(1) Sarah Williams** (Governance and Compliance Manager, Belfast City Council) ~ 30 mins  
*Belfast City Council's Language Strategy 2018-2023.*

**(2) Philip McDermott** (Ulster University) ~ 20 mins  
*Linguistic recognition and deeply divided societies: from accommodation to dialogue?*

Section 1a ~ Questions and Answers ~ 15 mins

#### **Break ~ 15 mins**

**(3) Janice Carruthers and Mícheál Ó Mainnín** (Queen's University, Belfast) ~ 20 mins  
*Language policy in Northern Ireland after 'New Decade, New Approach'.*

**(4) Niall Comer** (Ollscoil Uladh / Ulster University) ~ 20 mins  
*Preparing the path for language legislation: Conradh na Gaeilge, Ulster University and the New Decade, New Approach deal.*

**(5) Raffaella Folli, Juliana Gerard, Lynda Kennedy, Susan Logue and Christina Sevdali** (Ulster University) ~ 20 mins  
*Lessons from multilingual immigrant pupils: Ten years of Ulster Centre on Multilingualism (UCoM).*

Section 1b ~ Questions and Answers ~ 25 mins

### **SECTION 2 ~ 16.00 – 17.30**

#### **Language in humanitarian crises and pro-active peace-building in the global context**

**(1) Carmen Delgado Luchner** (University of Fribourg) ~ 30 mins  
*Planning the unpredictable: the managing of language intermediaries in humanitarian organizations.*

**(2) Javier Alcalde** (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona; Universitat Oberta de Catalunya) ~ 20 mins  
*Peace and linguistic diversity. Which role for Esperanto?*

Section 2 ~ Questions and Answers ~ 15 mins

**Concluding remarks and wrap ~ END OF DAY ONE**

## **TUESDAY 27 JULY 2021 ~ 12.30 (Belfast / London time)**

Welcome and introduction to the day – **Angela Tellier** (University of Essex)

CED's Academic Publications – **Michele Gazzola** (Ulster University)

### **SECTION 3 ~ 12.45 – 15.35**

#### **Language in the context of security and conflict resolution in Europe**

**(1) Alessandro Rotta** (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) ~ 30 mins  
Language policies as a conflict prevention tool: the experience of the High Commissioner on National Minorities.

**(2) Roberta Medda-Windischer** (Institute for Minority Rights, Eurac Research) and **Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark** (Åland Islands Peace Institute) ~ 20 mins  
Linguistic integration indicators as a tool for linguistic justice: evaluating the implementation of Ljubljana Guidelines-based policies through indicators.

**(3) Sarah McMonagle** (University of Hamburg) ~ 20 mins  
Language policy in multilingual cities.

#### **Section 3a ~ Questions and Answers ~ 20 mins**

#### **Break ~ 15 mins**

**(4) Sonja Novak Lukanovič** (University of Ljubljana) ~ 20 mins  
*Is language contact in Slovenia marked by language conflict?*

**(5) Ljubica Djordjević** (European Centre for Minority Issues) ~ 20 mins  
*Linguistic nationalism: legal status of languages/"languages" that emerged from Serbo-Croatian.*

#### **Section 3b ~ Questions and Answers ~ 25 mins**

### **SECTION 4 ~ 15.50 – 17.30**

#### **Promoting Linguistic Justice**

**(1) Irmgarda Kasinskaite-Buddeberg** (UNESCO) ~ 30 mins  
*International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022-2032) as one of the international cooperation mechanisms for the promotion of language justice.*

**(2) Michele Gazzola** (Ulster University) and **Mark Fettes** (Simon Fraser University) ~ 30 mins  
*An index of linguistic justice as a tool for conflict pre-emption.*

Section 4 ~ Questions and Answers ~ 15 mins

#### **Concluding remarks and wrap ~ END OF NITOBE SYMPOSIUM**

## ABSTRACTS ~ DAY ONE

**Ms Sarah Williams** ~ Governance and Compliance Manager, Belfast City Council

This presentation will set out the approach taken by Belfast City Council for the development and the implementation of a new Language Strategy for the city. It will cover the background to the Language Strategy, an outline of the Strategy and its aims, the work carried out to date and the next steps in the further development of the Strategy.

**Dr Philip McDermott** ~ Senior Lecturer in Sociology, Ulster University

This paper will consider some of the challenges involved when applying language rights in deeply divided societies. In particular, the paper argues that the application of such rights must move beyond a mere accommodation and integrate processes of dialogue between different language communities.

**Professor Janice Carruthers** ~ Professor of French Linguistics, Queen's University, Belfast

**Professor Mícheál Ó Mainín** ~ Professor of Irish, Queen's University, Belfast

The paper will address the position of languages in Northern Ireland policy-making after the New Decade, New Approach deal. This will include cultural domains (around Irish and Ulster Scots), community cohesion (including so-called "newcomer" communities), economic regeneration (including international trade and tourism) and educational issues (including cultural and socio-economic issues).

**Dr Niall Comer** ~ Lecturer in Irish, Ulster University (Research Department: Modern Languages and Linguistics); President of Conradh na Gaeilge

The provisions agreed upon for Irish Language legislation in The New Decade, New Approach deal were the result of a sustained community-based campaign which was underpinned by a research-based approach led by Conradh na Gaeilge and Ulster University. This contribution has been officially acknowledged by the Stormont Executive and the Irish Government and this paper will explore the process which led to the provisions for the Irish Language New Decade, New Approach deal.

**Professor Raffaella Folli** ~ School of Communication and Media; Provost of the Belfast/Jordanstown campus

**Dr Juliana Gerard** ~ Lecturer, School of Communication and Media, Ulster University

**Dr Lynda Kennedy** ~ Lecturer in Speech and Language Therapy, School of Health Sciences, Ulster University

**Ms Susan Logue** ~ Research Assistant on Language made Fun, School of Communication and Media, Ulster University

**Dr Christina Sevdali** ~ Senior Lecturer, School of Communication and Media, Ulster University

In the Northern Irish context, the concept of a "newcomer pupil" refers to immigrant children whose first language is not English or Irish. Ulster Centre on Multilingualism at Ulster University (UCoM) aims to synthesise and communicate academic research on multilingualism to parents, educators, Speech and Language Therapists and policy makers. For the past ten years, UCoM has worked with newcomers through two interrelated projects in collaboration with Barnardo's NI, Fane Street PS and Holy Rosary PS: Language Made Fun and Language Together. In this talk, we present key lessons learned from UCoM's research with Syrian, Sudanese and Roma newcomer children and their families; trilingual language acquisition (Devlin et al 2015 et. seq.); and age-effects in multilingual language acquisition (Logue et al 2020 et. seq). We show that the current policy Every school a good school: Supporting Newcomers Pupils (DENI 2009) which aims at increasing social cohesion and integration can be enhanced by considering the following findings: 1. The notion of a newcomer is useful to the extent that it does not obscure the fact that there are a wide range of multilingual learners with distinct language and educational needs. 2. There is variation in how groups from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds integrate with society and interact with mainstream schooling. 3. Many of the linguistic issues that multilingual speakers face when immersed in a new linguistic environment are linked to the properties of their first language. This can be used to assist teachers in the early days of these pupils' integration to the

school environment. 4. In order to integrate into society, newcomer children do not need to abandon their home linguistic identity but should be encouraged to use their home language in school settings. 5. Newcomer children's linguistic ability in the language of the society can be boosted through play-based extra-curricular activities that have the potential to improve integration by reducing the language barrier.

**Dr Carmen Delgado Luchner** ~ Director, Language Centre, University of Fribourg (Switzerland); Research Associate, University of the Free State (South Africa)

Drawing on research primarily within the International Committee of the Red Cross and additionally within the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), this presentation explores some of the structural challenges humanitarian organizations face during the selection, recruitment and deployment of interpreters. Particular emphasis will be placed on the humanitarian principle of Neutrality and how this impacts staff selection in ways that can deprioritize context-specific knowledge, including language skills. The language aspect of humanitarian work will be addressed against the backdrop of a wider debate that is currently taking place within the sector around the status and role of expatriate and local aid workers.

**Dr Javier Alcalde** ~ Lecturer in Political Science at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and Universitat Oberta de Catalunya

Although peace and linguistic diversity appear to be inherently linked, the causal mechanism is rarely mentioned in this regard. Why is it important to preserve linguistic diversity in order to achieve peace? I argue that one way to find that missing element is by considering democracy. First, according to the theory of democratic peace, there is a multidimensional relationship between peace and democracy, so that the transformation of all countries into democracies would lead to world peace. In other words, world peace would need a global democratic system.

Second, the main principles of democracy include the defence of the rights of minorities (including their languages), and the equal political participation of all citizens (often by using a majority language). The interdisciplinary literature on linguistic justice studies how to democratically achieve them in multilingual political communities, at different levels (local, national, international, etc.). Usually seen as a trade-off, on a global scale it would nevertheless be possible to achieve both goals at the same time (fairness and efficiency, identity and communication) through a universal language. The last part of my talk will answer the following question: Which language would be best suited to play such a role, necessary for linguistic diversity and therefore for peace?

## ABSTRACTS ~ DAY TWO

**Mr Alessandro Rotta** ~ Senior Advisor to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)  
High Commissioner on National Minorities

This contribution will build upon over twenty years of experience of the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) in shaping language policies as an instrument to prevent conflict and integrate diverse societies. Starting from the HCNM Oslo Recommendations regarding the Linguistic Rights of National Minorities, and analyzing best practices identified over the years, I will outline the determinants of a sound language policy. I will discuss how language policies should strike a balance between effective multilingualism and the promotion and use of official and unifying languages. The contribution will highlight how a balanced language policy is a fundamental instrument to govern diverse societies.

**Dr Roberta Medda-Windischer** ~ Senior researcher, Research group leader, Institute for Minority Rights, Eurac Research (Bolzano/Bozen, Italy)

**Dr Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark** ~ Associate professor of international law, Director, The Åland Islands Peace Institute (Mariehamn, Finland)

Are there minority sensitive integration indicators in Europe? Lessons from a recent study on mapping integration indicators in the OSCE area and against the background of the Ljubljana Guidelines on Integration of Diverse Societies (adopted by the HCNM in 2012). How is diversity understood in the indicators explored? How are qualitative and quantitative elements combined and what is the position of minority languages in such efforts?

**Dr Sarah McMonagle** ~ Research Fellow, Faculty of Education, University of Hamburg, Germany

Cities are culmination points of linguistic diversity. While municipal governments are subordinate to national governments, language policy in cities is an interesting and important phenomenon to research. Firstly, municipal services are in daily contact with the public. Cities must therefore make explicit decisions about how to respond (or not) to a diverse public. Those decisions may serve to agitate or alleviate situations of conflict or unrest. Secondly, cities may also overcome the constraints of national policies. Thirdly, with migration and urbanisation set to continue, cities signify the multilingual future. Depending on how cities respond to linguistic diversity, they may serve as models of integration, inclusion and participation, leading to peaceable co-existence – or showcase the opposite.

**Professor Sonja Novak Lukanovič** ~ Institute for Ethnic Studies, and Department for Comparative and General Linguistics, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana

The article will present the type of language contact present in Slovenia, exposing some of the external factors affecting such contact. Each language contact involves contact between groups, thus implying a potential language conflict between dominant/majority and minority communities. By presenting selected empirical data, light will be shed on the minority language (in particular, language policy and language planning) as a possible secondary indicator of the causes of conflict.

**Dr Ljubica Djordjević** ~ Senior Researcher, European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI)

The breakup of Yugoslavia has initiated a wave of national building in the successor states, in which language has played an important role. This has influenced the legal (constitutional) regulations on the official (state) language, and some controversies about the minority status for languages (or "languages") that once were considered single language. Most controversial cases offer Bosnia and Herzegovina (with three official languages (BHS) that derive from the Serbo-Croatian) and Montenegro (with the strong polarization along the axis Montenegrin-Serbian). Furthermore, the legal status of post-Serbo-Croatian languages in Croatia and Serbia, respectively, show an interesting dynamic in minority language protection between "communication" and "recognition".

**Dr Irmgarda Kasinskaite-Buddeberg** ~ Advisor, Communication and Information Sector, UNESCO

The International Decade of Indigenous Languages (IDIL2022-2032), proclaimed through the United Nations General Assembly Resolution (A/RES/74/135), is one of the key outcomes of the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages (IYIL2019), for which UNESCO acted as lead UN agency. The International Decade is a unique opportunity to enhance the world's linguistic diversity and to promote multilingualism, by mobilizing relevant stakeholders to take concrete actions through policy-making, and by leveraging resources to support indigenous languages worldwide.

**Dr Michele Gazzola** ~ Lecturer in Public Policy and Administration, School of Applied Social and Policy Sciences, Ulster University

**Dr Mark Fettes** ~ Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University

Language policy can cause significant distributional effects among various groups of people (defined according to their linguistic repertoire), and therefore it can affect the well-being of individuals living in a country or region. Official language policy can in fact affect the functions and the use of languages in society, whereby reducing or increasing inequalities between speakers in terms of what they can do and be in their languages. Such inequalities can be a potential source of conflict. An index of linguistic justice should make it possible to evaluate such distributional effects across time and space, and to monitor their development, and to act to control them.